

Joseph and his brothers



Sometimes I feel angry with someone because they have something I want. This is called being **jealous**. Have you ever felt jealous? What happened?



Joseph's brothers knew that Jacob loved him more than he loved them. So they hated Joseph. They could not say anything nice to him.

(Genesis chapter 37 verse 4, EASY)

Read: Genesis chapter 37 verses 1-11

Jacob had 12 sons. But he loved his son Joseph the most. Jacob gave Joseph a special coat. This made his brothers jealous.

Joseph had dreams where God showed him the future. In the dreams, the whole family bowed down to Joseph.

Joseph told his family about the dreams. This made his brothers even more jealous. They really hated Joseph.



Can you understand why Joseph's brothers felt jealous? What should they have done about their jealousy?

What did jealousy do to Joseph's relationship with his brothers?

The Bible says that jealousy hurts us. It hurts our relationships too.

It is hard when someone has something we want. Sometimes it does not feel fair. But if we let jealousy grow, we stop loving the person like God wants. We start to hate them instead.

The Bible says there is a better way to deal with jealousy. We should tell God how we feel. We should remember what is really important. And we should thank God for all the good things he has given us.



People become jealous of one another, and they become angry with each other...

What makes our life really rich? We should serve God in a way that pleases him and be happy with the things that we have.

(1 Timothy chapter 6 verses 4 and 6 (EASY))



Be satisfied with what you have. God has said, “I will never leave you; I will never run away from you.”

So we can feel sure and say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. Pople can do nothing to me.”

(Hebrews 13:5-6, ERV)



What do these verses tell us about what is most important?

What are some of the good things God has given you?



Choose one of these prayers to pray, or write your own.

Dear God, please help me when I feel jealous. Help me love people even when they have things I want. Help me remember all the good things you have given me too. Amen.

Dear God, please show me what is really important. Help me want the right things and not the wrong things. Amen.



Joseph is sold as a slave



Sometimes other people want me to do wrong things. And sometimes I do what they want instead of what I know is right. This is called **following the crowd**. Has this ever happened to you?



Joseph's brothers... said to each other, "Here comes Joseph the dreamer. We should kill him now while we can... Then we will show him that his dreams are useless."

(Genesis chapter 37 verses 18-20, ERV)

Read: Genesis chapter 37 verses 12-13 and 18-36

Joseph's brothers wanted to get rid of Joseph. They decided to kill him.

Reuben did not want to kill Joseph. He told his brothers to put Joseph in a hole and leave him there. He planned to come back later to save Joseph.

But after Reuben left, some men came along. They were going to Egypt to sell things. Judah did not want to kill Joseph either. So he told his brothers to sell Joseph to the men as a slave.

When Reuben came back, Joseph was gone. The brothers told their father that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal.



How did Reuben and Judah try to save Joseph? Did it work? Can you think of a better way to save him?

How do you think the brothers ended up deciding to kill Joseph? Would any of them have done this on their own?

The Bible tells us not to follow the crowd. When other people are doing wrong things, God wants us to keep doing what is right.

This is hard because we want other people to like us. We might be afraid they will make fun of us or stop being our friends.

The Bible says God is with us when we are afraid. He helps us when it is hard to do the right thing. He makes us strong and helps us stand up for what is right.



“Don’t do something just because everyone else is doing it. If you see a group of people doing wrong, don’t join them. You must not let them persuade you to do wrong things—you must do what is right and fair.”

(Exodus chapter 23 verse 2 (ERV))



“Don’t worry—I am with you. Don’t be afraid—I am your God. I will make you strong and help you... I am the Lord your God, who holds your right hand.”

(Isaiah chapter 41 verses 10 and 13, ERV)



What do these verses tell us to do when our friends are doing wrong things?

How does God help us when it is hard to stand up for what is right?



Choose one of these prayers to pray, or write your own.

Dear God, please help me not to follow the crowd. Show me what is right so I can make good choices even when other people make bad choices. Amen.

Dear God, thank you that you are with me when I am afraid. Help me to be strong and stand up for what is right even when it is hard. Amen.



Joseph does the right thing



I want to be someone people can trust. This means telling the truth and sticking to what I know is right. Sometimes no one will know if I do the right thing or not. But a **trustworthy** person does the right thing even when no one knows. Have you ever done the right thing when no one knew?



Joseph... said, "My master trusts me with everything in his house... I cannot sleep with his wife! That is wrong! It is a sin against God."

(Genesis chapter 39 verses 8-9, ERV)

Read: Genesis chapter 39 verses 1-12

Joseph was taken to Egypt. A powerful man called Potiphar bought Joseph to be his slave.

Joseph worked very hard for Potiphar. God helped him do well. So Potiphar put Joseph in charge of the whole house. God gave good things to Potiphar because of Joseph.



Potiphar's wife thought Joseph was very good looking. She told Joseph to have sex with her. But Joseph said no. He knew this would be very wrong. Potiphar's wife kept trying. She grabbed Joseph's coat. But Joseph ran away. He left his coat behind.



Why did Potiphar trust Joseph? Was he right to trust him? What bad things had happened to Joseph? Why do you think he kept doing the right thing when his life was hard?

God wants us to be trustworthy people. He wants us to tell the truth and treat people well. He wants us to stick to what is right, even when no one knows. God made the world, so he knows the best way to live. That means doing what God wants is always the best choice.

God is trustworthy too. He loves us and helps us. Sometimes bad things happen to us even when we do the right thing. But we can trust God to be with us. He helps us to keep going and not give up.



Keep your eyes on the path, and look straight ahead. Make sure you are going the right way, and nothing will make you fall. Don't go to the right or to the left, and you will stay away from evil.

(Proverbs chapter 4 verses 25-27, ERV)



Slaves, always obey your human masters. Do not do good work only when they can see you... Whatever things you are doing, do them well. Remember that you are serving the Lord. You are not only serving people.

(Colossians chapter 3 verses 22-23, EASY)



What do these verses tell us about how to be trustworthy?

What is the most important reason to keep doing the right thing when no one knows?



Choose one of these prayers to pray, or write your own.

Dear God, thank you that you know the best way to live. Help me stick to what is right, even when no one knows. Amen.

Dear God, please help me to be someone people can trust. Help me tell the truth and treat people well. Amen.



Joseph is sent to prison



Sometimes life is **unfair**. Doing the right thing does not always make my life better. Sometimes people get angry with me or lie about me. They even blame me for things I did not do. Has anyone ever treated you unfairly?



Joseph's master heard the story that his wife told him... He took hold of Joseph, and he put him in prison.

(Genesis chapter 39 verses 19-20, EASY)

Read: Genesis chapter 39 verses 13-23

Joseph had said no to Potiphar's wife. This made her very angry. So she told a lie about Joseph. She told Potiphar that Joseph had tried to make her have sex with him. This was not true!

Potiphar believed his wife. He was very angry with Joseph. He put Joseph in prison.



Joseph was in a bad place. But God was still with him. He made it so the man in charge of the prison liked Joseph. He put Joseph in charge of the other prisoners. God helped Joseph do well.



Joseph was blamed and punished for something he did not do. What do you think this was like for him?

How did God show Joseph he was still with him even in prison?

It is hard to keep trusting God when life is unfair. Sometimes we think God should save us from all the hard things in the world. But Jesus told us that following him would not make our lives easy. We can trust him because he has told us the truth about this.

The good news is that one day God will make a new world. In that world everything will be good. We will be happy with him forever.



Somebody might give you trouble, even when you do what is right. If that happens, God will bless you. So do not be afraid of what people may do to you... Do only what you know is right. Then those people will see that you live in a good way because you believe in Christ...

Christ himself always did what was right. But he received pain on behalf of people who do what is wrong... He did that to bring you near to God.

(1 Peter 3 verses 14, 16, 18, EASY)



[Jesus said,] “In this world you will have troubles. But be brave! I have defeated the world!”

(John chapter 16 verse 33, ERV)



Bad things happened to Jesus too. How did God bring good out of Jesus’s troubles?

What do these verses tell us about how we can keep trusting God when life is hard?



Choose one of these prayers to pray, or write your own.

Dear God, please help me trust you when life is unfair.
Please show me that are with me. Amen.

Dear God, thank you that in your new world everything will be good. Help me to remember this. Amen.



Joseph is forgotten



Sometimes someone promises they will do something for me. This makes me happy. But sometimes they **let me down**. They do not what they said they would do. This makes me feel forgotten and alone. I feel sad because things did not turn out the way I wanted. Has anyone ever let you down?



Everything happened the way Joseph said it would. But the wine server did not remember to help Joseph... The wine server forgot about Joseph.

(Genesis chapter 40 verses 22-23, ERV)

Read: Genesis chapter 40

There were 2 prisoners with Joseph. One baked bread for the king. The other served the king wine.

The baker and the wine server both had strange dreams. God helped Joseph understand what the dreams meant.

The wine server's dream meant the king would set him free from prison. He would get his job back. But the baker's dream meant he would be killed.

These things happened! The wine server promised to ask the king to set Joseph free. But he forgot all about Joseph.



God helped Joseph understand dreams. What has God made you good at? What does he help you to do?

Why do you think the wine server forgot about Joseph?

When people let us down it can really hurt us. It might make us feel angry, upset or hopeless. God cares about us. It is good to tell him how we feel. He already knows all our thoughts and feelings. And he wants to help us.

God tells us to forgive people when they hurt us. Forgiving someone means we do not try to get back at them. Instead, we give our angry feelings to God. This can be hard. But he promises to help us.



You know I am very upset. You know how much I have cried. Surely you have kept an account of all my tears.

(Psalms chapter 56 verse 8, ERV)



Don't be angry with each other, but forgive each other. If you feel someone has wronged you, forgive them. Forgive others because the Lord forgave you.

(Colossians chapter 3 verse 13, ERV)



What do these verses tell us about what God wants us to do when people let us down?

Why should we try to forgive people who hurt us?



Choose one of these prayers to pray, or write your own.

Dear God, thank you that you care about how I feel. Thank you that I can talk to you about all my thoughts and feelings. Amen.

Dear God, please help me forgive people who let me down. Help me remember that you have forgiven me. I know I can give all my angry feelings to you. Amen.



Joseph becomes a leader



Other people see how I live. I want to show everyone that being God's friend and living his way is really good. Then they might want to know God too. This is one way to be a **good leader**. I am trying to lead people to God. How do you try to lead people to God?



The seven years of hunger began, just as Joseph had said. No food grew anywhere in any of the countries in that area. But in Egypt people had plenty to eat because Joseph had stored the grain.

(Genesis chapter 41 verse 54, ERV)

Read: Genesis chapter 41 verses 1-43, 46-49 and 53-57

One night the king had 2 strange dreams. The wine server remembered Joseph! He told the king that Joseph could tell him what his dreams meant.

The king told Joseph about his dreams. And God told Joseph what the dreams meant.

Joseph said there would be lots of food for 7 years, then no food for 7 years. He said they must save some food for the bad years. The king agreed. He put Joseph in charge of saving the food. When the bad years came everyone had enough food to eat!



What are some things about Joseph that made him a good leader?

How did Joseph try to lead people to God?

Not all of us have jobs as leaders. But all of us can try to lead people to God. We can do this by doing what God wants. This shows people what God is like, and that it is good to live his way. We can also tell people the good news about Jesus.

Jesus is the real leader. He makes us friends with God and shows us how to live God's way. We want to lead other people to Jesus. Then they can follow him too.



[Jesus] said, "You know that the rulers of the non-Jewish people love to show their power over the people... But it should not be that way with you. Whoever wants to be your leader must be your servant... Do as I did: The Son of Man did not come for people to serve him. He came to serve others and to give his life to save many people."

(Matthew chapter 20 verses 25-26 and 28, ERV)



You are young, but don't let anyone treat you as if you are not important. Be an example to show the believers how they should live. Show them by what you say, by the way you live, by your love, by your faith, and by your pure life.

(1 Timothy chapter 4 verse 12, ERV)



What do these verses say about what makes a good leader?
What are some ways you can be a good leader to the people you know?



Choose one of these prayers to pray, or write your own.

Dear God, thank you I can lead people to you by living your way. Please help me do that. Amen.

Dear God, please help me tell people about you. Please help the people I love to trust Jesus and become friends with you. Amen.



Joseph tests his brothers



If someone hurts me badly, I do not hurt them back. But I have to decide if I want to keep being their friend. I am trying to make **wise** choices. So I want to see if the person is sorry and wants to change. It is wise to choose friends who are kind and treat me well. How do you choose your friends?



Joseph told the servants to fill the bags with grain. The brothers had given Joseph the money for the grain, but he didn't keep the money. He put the money in their bags of grain.

(Genesis chapter 42 verse 25, ERV)

Read: Genesis chapter 42 verses 5-13 and 18-29, then chapter 43 verses 8-23.

10 of Joseph's brothers came to Egypt to buy food from Joseph. They did not know who he was. But Joseph knew who they were! He remembered his dream.



Joseph said his brothers were spies. They said they were not! Joseph gave them some food. He told them to come back with their last brother, Benjamin.

He kept Simeon in prison while they went home for Benjamin.

Joseph tested his brothers. He put their money back in their bags. When they found the money they were afraid. They came back with Benjamin. They told Joseph about the money right away.



Why do you think Joseph put his brothers' money back in their bags?

Do you think Joseph's brothers had changed? Why?

God wants us to be kind to everyone we know. But he wants us to be wise about who we trust and who we are friends with. If someone hurts us, we should remember that everyone makes mistakes. Everyone does bad things sometimes. But if they keep being unkind to us and treating us badly, it is okay to stay away from them.

The Bible tells us what God wants us to be like. These are good things to look for in a friend too. It is wise to choose friends who show they care about us and help us to live the way God wants.



Godly people are careful about the friends they choose.

(Proverbs chapter 12 verse 26, NIrV)



This is how you should live: Be kind to other people and help them. Do not think that you are better than other people. Instead, respect them and be patient with them. Do not become angry with each other... And you must also love each other. That is the most important thing that you should do.

(Colossians chapter 3 verses 12-14, EASY)



What do these verses say about what makes a good friend?

When someone hurts you, how can you decide whether to keep being their friend?



Choose one of these prayers to pray, or write your own.

Dear God, when people hurt me, please help me to forgive them. Help me to know if they are really sorry. Help me decide whether to trust them again. Amen.

Dear God, thank you for the good friends I have. Please help me choose good friends who treat me well and help me live the way you want. Amen.



Joseph's brothers have changed



If someone I love is in trouble, I want to help them. But sometimes that means doing something hard. I have to choose between helping myself or helping them. It is **selfless** to help someone else instead of helping myself. Have you ever done something hard to help someone else?



[Judah said] “I took responsibility for the young boy... So now I beg you, please let the boy go back with his brothers, and I will stay and be your slave.”

(Genesis chapter 44 verses 32-33, ERV)

Read: Genesis chapter 43 verses 26-31, then chapter 44 verses 1-24 and verses 27-34.

Joseph loved Benjamin. He really wanted to tell his brothers who he really was. But he decided to test them once more. So he put a cup in Benjamin's bag. After they left to go home, he sent a servant to bring them back.



Joseph said someone had stolen his cup. It was in Benjamin's bag! Joseph pretended to be very angry. He said “Benjamin stole my cup! I will keep him here as my slave. The rest of you can go home.”

Judah was very sad. He said, “Please do not do that! Let Benjamin go home. I will be your slave instead!”



Why do you think Joseph tested his brothers again?

How did Judah show that he had really changed?

Helping another person is not always easy. It might cost us time or money. Or it might mean we have to do something hard.

The Bible tells to do good things for each other. It tells us to look after other people as well as ourselves. We can do this because we know God loves us and does good things for us too.

This does not mean we have to help everyone all the time. That is too much for us! But we should try to love other people like we love ourselves. We should all do what we can to help each other.



In the way that you live, do not just try to help yourself... Think about other people as more important than yourself. None of you should look out just for your own good. Each of you should also look out for the good of others.

(Philippians chapter 2 verses 3-4, EASY)



Jesus replied, “This rule is the most important rule: ‘...Love the Lord, your God completely...’ The second most important rule is this: ‘You should love other people as much as you love yourself.’”

(Mark chapter 7 verses 11-12, EASY)



How do these verses tell us to treat each other?

What might it look like to love other people as much as we love ourselves?



Choose one of these prayers to pray, or write your own.

Dear God, thank you that you give me a new start when I am sorry and want to change. Please help me give other people a new start when they are sorry. Amen.

Dear God, please help me to be selfless. Help me to do good for people even when it is hard. Amen.



Joseph forgives his brothers



I know that everyone does bad things sometimes. I do bad things sometimes too. So when someone hurts me I try to **forgive** them. This does not mean what they did was okay. But I do not hold it against them. And I try to give my angry feelings to God. Have you ever forgiven someone?



Joseph said to them, “Don’t be afraid. I am not God! I have no right to punish you. It is true that you planned to do something bad to me. But really, God was planning good things.”

(Genesis chapter 50 verses 19-20, ERV)

Read: Genesis chapter 45 verses 1-15 and 25-28, then chapter 46 verse 29, then chapter 50 verses 15-21.

When Judah tried to save Benjamin, Joseph started crying. He saw that his brothers had changed. So he said, “It is okay! I am your brother Joseph!”

Joseph’s brothers were amazed. They went home to bring their father Jacob back to Egypt.

So Jacob and his whole family came to live in Egypt. Jacob was very happy to see Joseph again.

Later, Jacob died. Joseph’s brothers were afraid. They thought Joseph might still be angry with them. But Joseph had forgiven them. He knew that God had brought good things out of the bad.



How had God brought good things out of the bad?

Do you think it was hard or easy for Joseph to forgive his brothers?

Forgiving people is not always easy. We might feel like we are letting them get away with hurting us. But the Bible says God will make everything right. He is the one who can judge people. We should give our angry feelings to God. He will decide what to do.

We know that God has forgiven us for the bad things we have done. That should make us thankful. So we should try to be like God. We should choose to forgive people who hurt us.



My friends, don't try to punish anyone who does wrong to you. Wait for God to punish them with his anger. In the Scriptures the Lord says, "I am the one who punishes; I will pay people back."

But you should do this: 'If you have enemies who are hungry, give them something to eat. If you have enemies who are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this you will make them feel ashamed.'

Don't let evil defeat you, but defeat evil by doing good.

(Romans chapter 12 verses 19-21, ERV)



Forgive one another. Remember that God has forgiven you because of what Christ has done.

(Ephesians chapter 4 verse 32, EASY)



How do these verses tell us to treat people who hurt us?

Why should we give our angry feelings to God?



Choose one of these prayers to pray, or write your own.

Dear God, thank you that you are a good judge. Help me trust that you will make everything right in the end. Amen.

Dear God, thank you that you have forgiven me. Please help me be like you and forgive other people too. Amen.



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